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ABSTRACT

This report provides an overview of Hispanic participation in education at the national level, in the state of Wisconsin, and in the Wisconsin Technical Colleges (WTCs). The first section provides national statistics, indicating that in 1990 Hispanics had a high school completion rate of 54.9%, more than 20 points below Black and 30 points below White completion rates, and that Hispanics aged 18 through 24 had an educational participation rate of 18%. Next, 1990 data for Wisconsin reveal that 42% of the state's Hispanics are age 17 and younger. The next section discusses the status of Hispanics in Milwaukee County, reviewing declining high school completion rates and an increase in dropouts and suspensions. The following sections examine the lack of English proficiency among minority groups; the status of limited-English-proficient students at Milwaukee Area Technical College; characteristics of Hispanics in Milwaukee County, reviewing issues related to poverty, employment, and Hispanic attitudes towards school. Also described are issues faced by Hispanics in the WTC, including a lack of basic skills; limited access to information about higher education; poverty; and under-representation of Hispanic staff and faculty, with Hispanics accounting for less than 1% of the faculty and staff. The final section lists 14 goals for improving the educational participation of and opportunities for Hispanic students. (TGI)

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HISPANIC PARTICIPATION AT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

by

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HISPANIC PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

National and State statistics provides us with a brief overview of the condition of Hispanics in key educational points. I will start with the national and state demographics and then move towards the local area and the Technical College.

National Statistics for Hispanic Students

Statistics for bilingual students are included in the Hispanic population data. Carter and Wilson in Minorities in Higher Education, 1991[1] report low high school completion, little gap between men and women high school graduation rates, sustained annual growth in graduation, and low participation in higher education:

1. The completion of high school rate for Hispanics was 54.9% in 1990, i.e., more than 20 below the rate for Blacks and nearly 30 below the rates for whites. (Tenth Annual Report). Hispanic completion **declined** in 1991 to 52.1% The completion rate is the lowest of the three groups.[2]

2. The gap of graduation rates between males and females was the lowest since 1973, when Hispanic men graduated at a higher rate than Hispanic women, i.e., in 1990, the rates were 53.7% for men and 55.3% for women. (Tenth Annual Report). The gap between Hispanic males and females **widened 6%**, i.e.,47.8%. Carter and Wilson state:

> rate was the lowest on record since the Census Bureau began collecting these data for Hispanics in 1972.[3]

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1 Carter Deborah J. and Wilson Reginald, Minorities in Higher Education, 1991 Tenth Annual Status Report, 1992

2 Minorities in Higher Education, 1992, Eleventh Annual Status Report, January 1993, page 4

3 Ibid., page 5

3. Hispanic graduation rates are expected to have sustained annual growth between 1986 and 1995, i.e., an increase of 52% by 1995. (Tenth Annual Report).

4. Hispanics have low participation rates for 18-24 year olds when one factors in the high school drop outs, i.e., 18%! Over half of this population had earned a high school diploma.[4]

5. Hispanic college participation rate for those who graduate from high school was 29% contrasted to 39.4% of white graduating seniors and 33% Black. (Tenth Annual Report). The rate increased to 34.4% in the 18-24 year old bracket due mostly to the increase in women enrollment.[5]

STATE OF WISCONSIN: AGE OF HISPANIC POPULATION

The Hispanic population in Wisconsin is very young. **Fifty** percent of the population is between 21 years and below and almost one third is between the ages of 22 and 39. Further, there is a large proportion under 17:

Age Category	Percent	Number
17 and below	42	39,342-----50%
18-21 years	8	7,525-----
22-29 years	15	13,837-----31%
30-39 years	16	14,717-----
40-49 years	8	7,997
50-59 years	5	4,632
60-69 years	3	3,114
70-79 years	2	1.414
80 and above	1	616[6]

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[4] Ibid, page 7

[5] Ibid, page 7

[6] 1990 Age Distribution of Male Population by Race and Hispanic Origin for Wisconsin Counties, Demographic Services, Wisconsin Department of Administration, June 17, 1991

The largest portion of the population is of Mexican American heritage, 65%, Puerto Ricans comprise 17%, and Cubans 2%. The remaining 17% is comprised of all other groups of Hispanic origin, Spanish and immigrants form Central and South America..[7]

Wisconsin Hispanics have resided in the state for some years. The 1980 Census indicates that 80% of Hispanics also lived in Wisconsin in 1975. The 20% that lived outside of the state came primarily from Puerto Rico, Texas, Illinois, and California.[8]

The Hispanic population is growing at a rate of 3% annually in the Midwest. Migration and high fertility rates contribute to the fast growth of the population. The Wisconsin's annual population growth rate is less than 1%.[9]

MILWAUKEE COUNTY: HISPANIC EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

Educational achievement for Hispanics in Wisconsin does not differ much from the national data. The State registered a .13% increase in dropouts in grades 9-12 from 1989-90 to 1990-91 but Milwaukee County had a .90% increase from a 9.54% to 10.44%. When Milwaukee Public Schools are taken by themselves, the rate increases from 14.7% to 16.1% with an increase of 1.4%.[10] The statistics of dropouts from eighth grade to ninth grade are not given. Hispanic drop outs between these grades in other states is considerable.

Hispanic males have a higher rate of dropout than females:

1989-90 school year dropout rate

Males..... 21.5%
Females.....17.1%[11]

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[7] Governor's Commission on Minority Participation in Vocational Technical Education, Hispanic Subcommittee Report, undated. Note: the report was issued in 1991

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid.

[10] High School Dropouts in Wisconsin Public School Districts 1989-90 and 1990-91, March 1992, pages 5-6

[11] Upward Bound, Milwaukee Area Technical College, December 3, 1991, p.21

Hispanics have the highest dropout rates of the three minorities:

Hispanic.....19.2%
Black.....17.4
White.....10.7[12]

Completion rates **have worsen** between 1980 and 1990 for the three minority groups with Hispanics recording the **largest decrease** in completion:

Percentage of students who began the ninth grade and graduated four-years later

Group	1980	1990	Ten Year Differential
Hispanics	47%	33%	-14%
Blacks	45	32	-13
American Indian	28	22	- 6
White	61	56	- 5
Asian	90	81	- 9[13]

A great proportion of Milwaukee students **do not continue** their education after grade twelve or **drop out** of school. In a four-year Milwaukee Area Technical College study of 6,499 Milwaukee ninth graders the following data was obtained:

	Number	%
Enrolling in a four year college/university	1,305	20.8
Enrolling in a two-year college	199	3.2
Not continuing with education after grade twelve	2,320	36
Not completing grade twelve	2,625	40[14]

Other statistics provide a bleak picture for Hispanic and Black retention in high schools in the Milwaukee Area. The Hispanic percent in each high school and the loss of students between the 9th and 12th grade over a four-year period is given below:

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[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Upward Bound, Milwaukee Area Technical College, 12-3-91

High School	Hispanic Percent	Loss Over a 4 Year Period
Bay View	4.1%	41.3%
Custer High	44.3	41.0
Pulaski	3.6	55.6
South Division	30.5	59.3
Washington	7.2	62.0
Riverside	7.2	61.0
North	7.2	57.0
M. Trade	7.2	13.0
Madison	7.2	10.0[15]

There has been an increase in dropouts, suspensions, and a decrease in academic achievement indicators[16]:

The grade point average percentage upon graduation of 1991 remained the same in 1992: 37%.

Eight Grade Competencies:

	1991	1992
Reading	72	68
Mathematics	43	39
Writing	46	51

Drop outs from eight to ninth grade is significant in the Hispanic population. The degree of the overall schools' achievement in these areas shows the gap that students must bridge in high school. The low achievement rate compounds the problems of bilingual students at the Milwaukee Area Technical College and the employment in low paying occupations.

Statistics for MPS dealing with students' ability to adjust to the schools became worse in 1992:

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[15] Ibid.

[16] The Milwaukee Journal, November 5, 1992

Drop outs	Increase from 14.7% to 16.1%
Suspensions	Increase from 9% to 13%
Attendance	Decrease from 81% to 80% at the high school level and
	Decrease from 89% to 88% at the junior high level and
	same rate of 92% at the elementary level[17]

LACK OF PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH

In 1986, the Milwaukee Public Schools implemented the Academic Competency Test for all students wishing to enter college. The academic skills is two points below the national average and four points below the state average. Minorities score significantly lower than the non-minority group:

Students Scoring at or above the national average

Hispanic	38%
Black	21
American Indian	36
Asian	39
White	58[18]

Achievement at or above the national average is 24.9 in reading and 33.4% in math.

PROFICIENCY OF LEP IN NATIVE LANGUAGE OR OTHER COURSES OF STUDY.

The bilingual population of the Milwaukee Area Technical College service area is mainly Puerto Rican and Mexican. There are new immigrants from El Salvador and Nicaragua. The degree of fluency varies greatly between the population with newly arrived immigrants having the least command of the English language.

MATC's report No.93-1004, Student Survey Report, the Hispanic sample indicated that 48% spoke Spanish and English at home. It was the highest percentage of all minorities in the group who spoke a language other than English.

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[17] The Milwaukee Journal, November 5, 1992

[18] Ibid.

A Governor's Council on Hispanic Affairs publication reported a low percentage of Hispanics who do not speak English, i.e., 2% and a large proportion who speak only English, i.e., 39%[19] Bilingualism can be inferred in 49% of the population.

The overall grade point average of Hispanic High School students in Milwaukee is 1.67 in a 4 point scale. Non-minority students have a 2.14 grade point average.[20]

Of Hispanics age 25 and older, 54% have less than four years of High School education.[21]

Of the Hispanics enrolled in VTAE programs, approximately 90% participate in a remedial program.[22]

Limited English proficient students rose 14 percent during the 1990-91 school year, i.e. from 1.98 million to 2.26 million.[23] Illinois had an increase of 8.3% from 1990. Jim Lyons of the National Association for Bilingual Education stated in the Leadership News that **the gap** between equal and effective educational opportunity for LEP students continues to grow.

> LEP students as individuals whose native language is not English and who have difficulty speaking, reading, writing or understanding English that may deny them the opportunity to participate successfully in classrooms and the larger society.[24]

The increase of the number of the LEP population in Illinois impacts Wisconsin due to the migration to Wisconsin from Illinois.

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19 Undated report. Probably 3-22-90

20 Governor's Commission on Minority Participation in Vocational Technical Education, Hispanic Subcommittee Report, undated. Note: the report was issued in 1991

21 Ibid

22 Ibid

23 Leadership News, September 30, 1992, page 4

24 Ibid

POVERTY, EMPLOYMENT, AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS SCHOOLS

Milwaukee Area Technical College serves a Hispanic population living in poverty. In Report No. 93-1004, Student Survey Report, July 1993, the sample of respondents indicated that all minorities were living below the poverty cut off point! The income is contrasted to $23,143 for non-minority:

Hispanic	$ 13,223
Black	11,203
American Indian	10,312
Asian	9,850

Exploration of occupations with higher than average wages is necessary to incorporate the minority community in the economic stream of Wisconsin. Poverty and unemployment adversely impacts the student's ability to learn and to participate in higher education. Poverty is increasing rather than decreasing.

The Milwaukee Journal, reported on November 10, 1992 that 71% of pupils in the Milwaukee Public Schools qualifies for lunch plan. This percentage is an increase over the 68% of a year ago.

Approximately 20% of all Hispanic persons in Wisconsin received financial assistance from one of three Income Maintenance Programs, i.e., Food Stamps, AFDC, and Medical Assistance. Hispanics are 4.6% of the persons receiving Income Maintenance (December 1989 data).[25]

Recent data suggests that students are not completely turned off to the school experience. Those who dropped out of school stated they planned to return and graduate and reported a preference for returning to school and obtaining a GED:

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[25] Governor's Commission on Minority Participation in Vocational Technical Education, Hispanic Subcommittee Report, undated. Note: the report was issued in 1991

Reasons for dropping out:

School Related:

Did not like school	42.3
Could not get along with teachers	26.8
Was failing school	39.3
Found a job	20.8
Plan to return and graduate	29.0
Plan to get a general equivalency diploma (GED)	59.1[26]

Hispanic males reported not liking school, could not get along with teachers, and failing in school in greater percentages than any other reasons. The provision of counseling services insures Hispanic males are encouraged and counseled to remain in school. Personnel who is knowledgeable of the bilingual bicultural student will be recruited as well. Staff development activities on how to work with Hispanic male drops needs to be undertaken.

Male Hispanic Reasons for Leaving School	**Percentage Males**
Did not like school	57.8
Could not get along with teachers	51.6
Felt I did not belong	31.5
Could not keep up with school work	37.6
Was failing in school	46.9[27]

The data does provide the evidence for the development of a program which *focuses on climate of the institution* and the employment of teachers who have the skills to teach the Hispanic population.

Hispanic students give reasons for returning to school which are related to obtaining a job after graduation, institutional climate, curriculum which is job-related, demonstration of parental interest in education, and improvement of skills in reading and mathematics:

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[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid.

Reasons students would likely return to school	Percentage
If it would improve reading skills	53.3
If it would improve math skills	54.6
If I felt I could graduate	57.3
If I felt sure that I could get a good job after graduation	66.7
If I could take more job related courses	48.3
If I felt sure I could get tutoring help to do better in school	57.5
If I felt I belonged at school	52.6
If school was more interesting	57.6
If I could attend classes at night or on weekends	48.4
If parents were interested in my education	50.3[28]

Lower grade point averages and lower passing rates in State examinations describe a population with low basic skills upon dropping out of high school.

The poverty of the Hispanic population is a deterrent to access to higher education. Financial aid information and availability of funds is crucial to Hispanics. A Governor's Commission on the Participation of Minorities in the VTAE system indicated that Hispanics do not have access to information about financial aid.

Financial aid for students who are interested in MATC is a vehicle for Hispanics with low incomes; but we have a long way to go yet. Statistics for providing financial aid services and actual awards to Hispanic students need improvement:

> Hispanics constituted 2.6% of all applications for aid under the seven state grant programs in 1988-89:

White	Black	Hispanic	Oriental	Indian
80.9%	12.2%	2.6%	2.1%	2.1%[29]

Statistics on information provided to minorities regarding financial aid on a state basis was not available. Hispanic statistics for Milwaukee Area Technical College are as follows:

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[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid

	Students	%	Funds	%	Average Aid
Total	5,050	100	14,084,607	100	$2,789
Hispanic	279	5.5	755,559	5.3	$2,708[30]

A low number of Hispanic students, 317, receive .1 million in financial aid. They receive 2.3% of available funds. Blacks receive 12.6%, Oriental 2.4%, and Indian, 2.1%.:

	White	Black	Hispanic	Oriental	Indian
Students	9,913	1,684	317	319	255
% Spent	76.5%	12.6%	2.3%	2.4%	2.1%[31]

Financial assistance is usually limited to full time or half time students in credit programs. Only the Pell Grants allow for one year of financial assistance for a student in a remedial program. Pell Grants had a maximum award limit of $2,300 in 1988-89.[32] Given the degree of need in remedial education, this limitation adversely impacts Hispanics.

Milwaukee Area Technical College needs to provide information on financial aid to Hispanic students early in their educational career to insure the students can utilize the services of the college in financing their education. Workshops with parents and students on the availability of funds is necessary in reaching the population.

Although Hispanic workers have a higher rate of labor force participation than the general population, i.e., 67% as compared to a 66% for the total population, [33] Hispanic workers are employed in low paying or declining occupations. Over 60% of Hispanic workers in Wisconsin are employed in four occupation categories:

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30 Ibid

31 Ibid

32 Ibid

33 Monthly Labor Review. January 1990

Machine operators/assemblers/inspectors	27.6%
Administration support and clerical	13.6
Services not household or protection	13.3
Handlers/cleaners/helper/laborers	8.8
Total	63.3%

HISPANIC ISSUES IN THE WISCONSIN TECHNICAL COLLEGES

The Governor's Commission on Minority Participation in Vocational and Technical Education, Hispanic Subcommittee listed lack of basic skills, access to information, poverty, and under-representation of Hispanic staff and faculty in the Technical Colleges of Wisconsin:

LACK OF BASIC SKILLS:

Hispanic students lack the basic skills to successfully enter and complete post secondary education programs. The lack of English comprehension, an environment of poverty and a fear of the bureaucracy, are some of the principal forces that prevent Hispanic children from acquiring the necessary basic skills. As a result, Hispanic children are less prepared to compete with their non-minority counterparts in higher education and gainful employment.

The lack of funds from the State and the Ability to Benefit requirements is making more difficult for the Community/Technical Colleges to provide educational services to students who are not prepared to enter the occupational areas that have high paying wages. Since Milwaukee is urban and mostly minority it is difficult for the State to consider the unique needs of Milwaukee. We have lost more than a million dollars in funding in the current year simply by a change made a the State Board which impacted us the most.

The lack of basic skills forces Hispanics to be enrolled in remedial courses rather than in occupational programs that lead to a degree or certificate. The enrollments and the graduation rates show a population obtaining skills necessary to enter programs.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION:

Hispanic students lack information about higher education. Many students are locked out by the limited expectations and views of their school counselors and teachers. For many, they will be the first in their family to attend a postsecondary program. While parents are supportive, they simply do not have the experience with which to advise their children. Unfortunately, role models in the community are also limited. Participation of high school graduates from Milwaukee Public Schools is about 10%; therefore, the participation from our urban minority population is low. We can infer the participation of Hispanics is lower than the main population.

POVERTY:

Hispanic students are more likely to live in poverty than their non-minority counterparts. It is estimated that 40% of all Hispanic children live in poverty. As a result, the opportunity to take advantage of higher education is more limited. Available financial aids offer limited assistance. However, federal emphasis on loans rather than grants has had a negative impact on the ability of a Hispanic student to afford a postsecondary education. Further, the student's culture may dictate that the older male help support the family or place a lower value on education for the female members of the family. The need for immediate income for the subsistence needs of the family is a large barrier to further education of Hispanic students.

UNDER-REPRESENTATION OF HISPANIC STAFF AND FACULTY:

Hispanic constitute less than 1% of the faculty and staff in the vocational technical and adult education system. The absence of Hispanics on staff may contribute to the low levels of Hispanic enrollments and retention in the system. Hispanic students facing economic, language, cultural and educational barriers are unlikely to find a Hispanic staff or faculty to serve as role models, mentors, advisor, and advocates. In addition, the absence of Hispanic staff and faculty prevent the broader student body and faculty from being exposed to and understanding the Hispanic culture. The lack of understanding and sensitivity to the culture often leads to the sense of alienation that many students and faculty feel.

MATC's Affirmative Action Employment Trends by Equal Employment Opportunity Category, 1988 to 1992 as of September 30 of each year shows an increase in the number and percentage of Hispanics in all categories with the exception of the skilled trades were there has not been a Hispanic employed in any of the years. The total district employment has increased from 50 (4%) in 1988 to 80 (6%) in 1992. There has been an increase in each of the categories:

	1988	92
Executive/Administrative Managerial	7	13
Faculty	12	18
Professional/Noninstructional	10	17
Secretarial/Clerical	8	13
Technical/Paraprofessional	4	8
Skilled Trades	0	0
Service/Maintenance	9	11

Of the four Districts with most of the Hispanic population, the Milwaukee Area Technical College has more than half, i.e., 59% of the population:

Milwaukee	39,981
Gateway	15,862
Madison	6,097
Waukesha	5,843[34]

MATC serves all of Milwaukee County and has contracts with Community Based Organizations to insure access of students to MATC; however, it does not have special programs to access the minority population in those high schools with a high loss of students:

High School	Hispanic Percent	Loss Over a 4 Year Period
Bay View	4.1%	41.3%
Custer High	44.3	41.0
Pulaski	3.6	55.6
South Division	30.5	59.3
Washington	7.2	62.0
Riverside	7.2	61.0
North	7.2	57.0
M. Trade	7.2	13.0
Madison	7.2	10.0[35]

South Division High School has a special Tech/Prep program of integration of curriculum. It is a national model for integrating the world of work in the curriculum. Preliminary statistics indicate that the approach improves the academic achievement of the students.

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[34] Governor's Commission on Minority Participation in Vocational Technical Education, Hispanic Subcommittee Report, undated. Note: the report was issued in 1991

[35] Ibid.

IMPROVEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PARTICIPATION

We need to improve educational opportunities of Hispanic students. We need an advocate for Hispanic children. While the former Chair of Milwaukee Public Schools publicly stated her commitment and work to advance the educational achievement of Hispanic students, we do not have anyone coming forth in public as an advocate for Hispanic students.

The goals of Hispanics to improve the educational achievement and opportunities are as follows:

Goal #1: **Increase the number of Hispanics** who serve on Board of Trustees at the technical college and public school level.

Goal #2: **Provide Hispanic nominations** for State Boards who have responsibility for education impacting Hispanics.

Goal #3: **Improve the high school graduation rate** of Hispanic students.

Goal #4: **Improve the educational transitions** between elementary and junior high school, high school and junior high, and college and high school.

Goal #5: **Improve the curriculum for Hispanic students.** Provide a curriculum which reflects the rich cultural background of the Hispanic.

Goal #6: **Expand the educational options** available to Hispanic high school students.

Goal #7: **Improve the curriculum of the high school** Hispanic student to **include** vocational oriented courses.

Goal #8: **Improve the educational opportunities** of Hispanic students through participation in a technical oriented curriculum and instruction.

Goal #9: **Expand career opportunities** for Hispanic students through exploration of careers in a technical college.

Goal #10: **Expand partnerships** between the Milwaukee Public Schools and the Community Based Organizations in the education of Hispanic students.

Goal #11: Improve **access of higher education** to Hispanic students through exposure to a technical college.

Goal #12: **Integrate the Hispanic student** in the regular student population.

Goal #13: **Form a Wisconsin Hispanic Education Association** to foster the academic achievement of Hispanics in Wisconsin.

Goal #14: **Enhance employment opportunities** of Hispanic students through the use of the Career Center and job related curriculum and instruction.

Let's us make it an agenda for all the Hispanics.

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